



Jill K Willis

WRITER



July 2023 Newsletter

Happy 4th of July!!!



While visiting a Serbian school last month, Marvin and I learned that the primary goal of many of its students is to live in America. When I asked three female eighth graders why (note that one is wearing a Yale sweatshirt), they replied together, "It's the land of opportunity."

It blows my mind to listen to people complain about America when these girls would give anything to move to our country. Today, let's remember the countless blessings we enjoy as citizens of our great nation. May your day be filled with joy, laughter, and the sweet aroma of barbecue.

God bless America!



Strawberry Ice Cream

Have you ever watched fireworks in the rain? Well, that's Marvin and me last night watching the spectacular display over Lake Lanier. Beforehand, we churned out some amazing ice cream. Here's our recipe:

A pint and a half of strawberries
2 cans of sweetened condensed milk
1 pint of whipping cream

1 TBSP vanilla extract
1/2 gallon of whole milk

Combine the first four ingredients in a blender until semi-smooth. Pour the mixture into your electric ice cream metal container. Add the milk to the fill line and secure the top. Pour ice and ice cream salt into the bucket around the container. Attach the motor. Churn until the motor stops, usually 30-35 minutes.

My Bookshelf

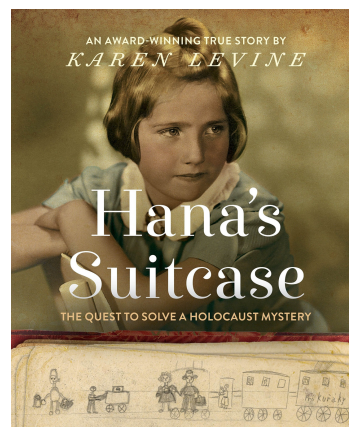
Here's what I've read the past couple months. Follow me on [Goodreads](#) to view how I've rated the books I've read since 2010.

The Resolution for Women, Priscella Shirer □□□□
All My Knotted-Up Life, Beth Moore □□□□
Remarkably Bright Creatures, Shelby Van Pelt □□□□
Hana's Suitcase, Karen Levine (MG & YA) □□□□
The Shop on Royal Street, Karen White □□□□
The House on Prytania, Karen White □□□□
Patricia Fisher Mystery Series (1-10), Steve Higgs □□□□
Hello Beautiful, Ann Napolitano □□□
The Housemaid, Freida McFadden □□□

MIDDLE GRADE & YOUNG ADULT BOOK REVIEW

Hana's Suitcase by Karen Levine

During our recent vacation in Prague, Czech Republic, we visited the WWII Jewish Ghetto and prison in the former resort town of Terezin. My heart broke to learn about the 88,000 Jews who lived there before passing through to Auschwitz. Another 33,000 Jews died within its fortress-like walls as a result of malnutrition and disease.



In Europe, *Hana's Suitcase* is now just as popular as *The Diary of Anne Frank*. I recommend that American students add it to their summer reading lists because of its amazing present-day story and learning resources.

In 2000, Fumiko Ishioka, the curator of the Children's Holocaust Education Center in Tokyo, Japan, received a suitcase in the mail after writing her counterparts in leading Holocaust museums asking for loans of children's WWII artifacts. The suitcase bore the name Hana Brady and the date May 16, 1931.

Fumiko formed a student group to research Hana's background. Though difficult, this group finally brought Hana's story to light. They also discovered she had an older brother and a grandmother who spent time in the notorious ghetto.

Once they had established Hana's full story, complete with photos and drawings, Fumiko and her group provided their findings to Karen Levine, who did a fabulous job putting it on the page.

The author recreates Hana's early family life through words and photos, then provides a credible imagined story of her frightening life in Terezin. At the end of the book, Levine offers ideas for learning about the Holocaust, such as packing a suitcase for living in a ghetto, writing a letter to loved ones from a ghetto, and banding together to fight racism.

This Friday, the Storyteller Squad will publish my full review of this book, complete with photos that I took of the children's dormitory and prison. Find it [here](#).

Check out all my [young adult book reviews](#) on my website.

Like vs Such As

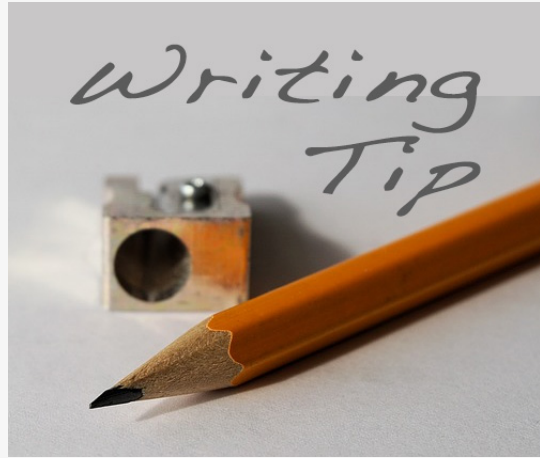
Sorry. **Like** and **such as** should not be used interchangeably. **Like** is used to make comparisons, especially in similes.

Creston Mapes' novels are **like** a roller coaster ride.

Such as should be used to list specific examples and is another way of saying *including*.

I love to read Christian-based books, **such as** Creston Mapes' new release *Secrets in Shadows*.

Y'all, if you haven't read Creston's thrillers, I highly recommend you try one. His *Signs of Life* series is fantastic. I'm also a huge fan of *Charm Artist*.



"Then join hand in hand, brave Americans all! By uniting we stand,
by dividing we fall."
- John Dickinson, a Founding Father from Philadelphia

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Jill K Willis, writer

Flowery Branch, GA USA

jill@jillkwillis.com



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